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*With the Compliments of
President Loudon.*

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BY THE PRESIDENT,
JAMES LOUDON, LL.D.



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Convocation Address.

IN accordance with a custom of more than fifty years' standing, it is my duty on this occasion to address you on some aspects of the educational work which is being carried on by the University.

Allow me first of all to express the gratification which I feel in seeing before me so large and representative an audience, a proof, I take it, of undiminished interest in and sympathy with the great cause of higher education in this Province.

We have awarded for the first time to-day the Glashan Medal in Mathematics, the Ottawa Medal in Physics, and the prizes for Italian, donated by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs. The Glashan Medal has been established by Mr. J. C. Glashan of Ottawa, a distinguished alumnus of this University, who is widely known for his researches in Mathematics, and whom I rejoice to mention as an old personal friend of my own, and a right loyal friend of the University. The Ottawa Medal is the gift of eight alumni of the University, resident in Ottawa, Mr. Glashan being one of the number. The remaining seven gentlemen are John Lorn McDougall, W. D. LeSueur, William Fitzgerald, Otto J. Klotz, Frederick Hayter, Alexander H. McDougall, and S. B. Sinclair, all names familiar to us in the civil service or in educational circles. It gives me great pleasure to convey publicly the thanks of the University to these gentlemen, and to the Italian Government for their generous gifts.

Turning now to our record of progress during the year, I am happy to state that the University continues to prosper. We receive, from time to time, most gratifying evidence of the success which attends our graduates in after life, as the result of the efficient training and high standard of scholarship which it has

always been the aim of the University to maintain. Especially is this true of those who go abroad to pursue post-graduate studies; the most recent compliment which has reached me being the remark of an eminent German Professor of chemistry, who figuratively refers to the students we send him as "lights out of the darkness of the western world."

The attendance of students during the last session showed a slight decrease—a total of 1,322 as compared with 1,353, or a decrease of two per cent. in round numbers, due to a diminution in the Freshman class. Two circumstances tend to operate against an increase of students, though it is impossible to exactly estimate their effect. The first of these is the increase of ten dollars in the fees, which has been made during the last two years. Let me assure you that this measure has been adopted with much regret by the authorities, and is one of expediency, not of principle. The fees were increased because the money could not be had from any other source. Any movement in the direction of withdrawing the privileges of university education from the poor and placing them in the power of the rich is a national mistake. It is surely undesirable to bar the intellectual progress of the talented son of the poor man by a prohibitive fee, it is surely wrong to set up a standard which discriminates against the poor and in favour of the rich, and it is just as surely a national loss if the talents of any man fall short of their legitimate development.

Unfortunately, this question is but imperfectly understood, and there is, I observe, in some quarters a tendency to increase the High School fees. Of course it is a rough and ready way of meeting objections to say, "If people want higher education let them pay for it." Many of those who use this argument are the very persons who have everything to lose and but little to gain by its application. If education were a possession which a man might acquire and use for himself alone, the argument might have some force, though it still would be a mistake and an injustice to bar out the poor man's son; but in education no man liveth to himself, and what he acquires redounds indirectly to the profit of the community and the nation as a whole.

The second circumstance which I fear has robbed us of many a promising matriculant is the nature of our entrance examination. It should not be the aim of a university to keep out the largest number of students, but rather to turn out as many as possible with general or special talents fully developed. It is not wise, nor is it right, to set up a barrier to be overleaped, which, while apparently smooth and straight, contains one or more projecting though invisible spikes upon which the unfortunate candidate is liable to be impaled. What we want is a fair and uniform standard of difficulty in all subjects required by the curriculum, such a test, indeed, as is exacted in the great universities of the world, and not a standard calculated to trap the unwary, or those who have not special aptitude in certain subjects. Ample provision is made in our honour matriculation for students with special talents. This desirable uniformity, in spite of all our efforts, we have not been able to attain, and its attainment is one of the problems which still await solution.

Among the indications of progress, I refer now to the success which has attended both our post-graduate work and the publication of researches by members of the staff and graduate students in serial form, under the title of "University Studies." And I take occasion here to acknowledge the encouragement given by the Minister of Education in this new enterprise, which without his assistance would hardly have been possible. Although much work of this kind has been done by members of the staff in the past, the University has failed to receive due credit for it. These "Studies" will put us as a University into touch with the scientific world, and serve to obtain for us abroad that recognition of our intellectual resources and development which is just as important in its way as the costly advertising of the material resources of Canada. They are also useful from a pecuniary point of view as library exchanges for scientific journals, many of which would otherwise require to be purchased. Exchanges have already been arranged for with sixty-four British and foreign universities and twenty-four foreign academies of science. The cost of these exchanges, if obtained by purchase, would amount

to several hundred dollars a year. The publication, then, has had a most gratifying success, although we are without the contributions of some members of the staff, who find it expedient to publish their researches in other scientific journals.

Now, as to research in general, I may say that we recognize the fact that a university is not fully performing its functions if it is content to be solely a transmitter of knowledge, however efficient it may be in this essential work. It must go further, and add its mite to the sum of human science. This is the highest function of a university. I need not enlarge upon the advantage to the individual who engages in research work—the joy and stimulus to effort from the discovery of new knowledge, the training in methodical and independent thinking, the enlargement of his whole mental horizon. These things are universally admitted, but I make bold to assert that the student who makes a real contribution to the advancement of knowledge, does as much or more for his country, than the man who discovers a gold mine.

During the past year, we have had in our class-rooms and laboratories, twenty-five graduate students, and of these several were in training for the degree of Ph.D. We have been censured by some for the establishment of this degree, in the belief that it would prove a cheap and empty honour. There is little to fear on that score. The country is not likely to be overrun with Doctors of Philosophy from this University, and we may be depended upon to maintain for the new degree a standard which will enhance the reputation which the University has already earned for sound scholarship.

Of late years, in certain departments, research work has been attempted even by some of the undergraduates of the Fourth year, and I am glad to say the experiment has given some very promising results. In no other way does it seem possible to awaken in the student an absorbing interest in his subject. I hope to see this kind of work more general among Fourth year students, though it should be remarked that it is easier in some departments than in others to find appropriate problems—in some, indeed, almost impossible for beginners.

By a rather sudden transition, I come now to speak of the subject of athletics, in its proper place and in due moderation, a valuable auxiliary to university work. This University has done a great deal for the physical development of the student. I think I may say without boasting that it has done more in this way than any other educational institution in Canada. It has provided the commodious and well-equipped Gymnasium Building in which we are now assembled, and it has increased, at considerable expense, the field accommodation for outdoor sports. During the past summer we have put into order an additional large plot of ground admirably adapted for this purpose, to be known as the "University Athletic Field." May I express the hope that the students will maintain in this new field the honourable record which has already been made by them for University athletics? I might mention as a sign of the athletic tendencies of our times that we have organized an Athletic Board made up from the Faculty and the Athletic Association, with the hope that the interests of all the clubs will be still further advanced.

Some years ago the old company of University Rifles was disbanded owing to causes which need not be entered upon now. This would surely not have been done had the services which K Company rendered to the country directly and indirectly been estimated at their true value. Some of those who know of these services took steps more than a year ago for the organization of a University battalion of rifles and engineers, and I had hoped to be able to announce the success of the project to-day. Unfortunately, the answer to an inquiry addressed to the Government does not usually come by return post, and I have to report the matter as still under serious consideration. I regard military drill as one of the most useful of athletic exercises, both in its physical and moral effects, and I hope that we shall yet attain our object.

Coupled with this project was another to replace the Memorial Window, destroyed in the fire of 1890, to those University students who fell at Ridgeway in 1866. This scheme need not wait upon the other, and I would urge especially old members of

the University Rifles, *quorum pars parva fui*, to see that there is no more delay in commemorating the names of McKenzie, Mewburn, and Tempest, who lost their lives on that occasion. It is but right that their courage and patriotism—a patriotism of deeds, not words—should have a public and lasting recognition, a memorial that would show what University students have done, and, if occasion should arise, would again do in defence of their country.

I should like to go on to tell you of what we should do if we had unlimited funds, but in the absence of any visible means of supplying all the wants of the University I shall refer only to the department of mineralogy and geology. In addition to the temporary arrangements which we have made since the retirement of Professor Chapman, we have also drawn upon the resources of the School of Practical Science for the instruction of our students. This institution has a strong department of Mining Engineering, amply equipped for training students in all branches of their profession, including of course mineralogy and geology. In view of the splendid facilities provided by the Province at our very door, I have often been asked why University students cannot obtain instruction in mineralogy and geology in the School, just as students of engineering receive instruction at the University in mathematics, physics and chemistry. As a matter of fact the University course and the Engineering course in mineralogy and geology do overlap, and therefore it is reasonable to suppose that our students can obtain instruction at the School to some extent. But it should be remembered that the two institutions should approach the study from different points of view. The mining engineer selects only those parts which have a direct and practical bearing upon the work of his profession, just as he selects similar portions of the mathematics and physics of our courses. The University student of geology, on the other hand, must take up the subject in its broadest aspects, and pursue investigations which may or may not have an immediate economic value, and in doing so may find questions of the highest scientific importance in what the mining engineer ignores. In short, while the

University student may receive at the School all the instruction which he requires in mineralogy and lithology, for example, still the University must make provision for the complete treatment of geology—dynamic, structural and stratigraphic. To make this teaching effective a Geological Museum must also be established, not necessarily a vast assortment of specimens, but a teaching museum arranged to illustrate the work in geology, and affording facilities for the student of geology similar to those already provided in the Biological Museum for the student of biology.

This is but one of the ways in which the University must expand in the near future, if it is to keep pace with the general progress of learning and the needs of Ontario in higher education. It is the province of the University to maintain that high standard of knowledge in science and literature to which the standard of secondary instruction and primary instruction are infallibly proportionate, and which just as infallibly marks the intellectual power and progress of the country as a whole. This truth which cannot too often be reiterated is, I think, making headway, and I hope that the time will soon come when the Province will fully realize its responsibility in the matter by granting the financial aid necessary to the maintaining of all departments on a scale worthy of an intelligent and progressive community.
